



## 1.0 Introduction



## Purpose of this Plan

The purpose of this plan is to chart the course for a more attractive, economically successful, vibrant and safe Cumberland Avenue.

This is a distinct challenge because Cumberland Avenue serves as the major transportation facility serving the University of Tennessee, Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center, the East Tennessee Children's Hospital and downtown Knoxville. This state and federally designated highway carries between 24,000 and 32,000 vehicles per day (between West Volunteer and 11th Street), and thousands of pedestrians from the University and hospitals use the corridor day and night.

The planning process examined alternative street design and configuration options for Cumberland Avenue and a supporting long-term urban design vision for the corridor in order to create a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly environment. The result will be a corridor that serves as an attractive gateway to the University of Tennessee, the hospital campuses and downtown, improves the residential and retail character of the district and balances the movement of pedestrians, motorized vehicles and bicycles.



Cumberland Avenue: Existing

## Executive Summary

The following summarizes and highlights the key results, concepts and recommendations of the Cumberland Avenue Corridor Plan.

### Streetscape

- **Implement the three-lane reconfiguration.** There is strong public and stakeholder support and the technical analysis suggests that the impact on traffic in the evening peak hour results in an **additional 1 minute of travel time** through the corridor.
- The proposed reconfiguration and streetscape provides **wider sidewalks, street trees, is more bicycle friendly, accommodates transit and delivery trucks** in pull-out stops, is **safer and slower**, and is attractive and **development supportive**.
- **Estimated Streetscape Cost: \$5.8 million.**
- Estimated Utility Relocation Cost: **\$1.1 million (relocated to alleys) or \$2.3 million (relocated underground).**

### The Urban Design Plan

- While a market analysis has not been conducted for this study to determine its development potential, the urban design plan calculated the potential for more than **1,400 new housing units and 130,000 square feet of ground floor commercial** uses in mixed-use redevelopment on key sites likely to redevelop.
- This amount of development, calculated roughly at \$200,000/residential unit and \$200/square foot of commercial use, could conceivably result in more than **\$280 million in new private investment**.
- **Rewrite the C-7 Design District Regulations.** These regulations are outdated and do not support the type of redevelopment envisioned in the urban design plan. Use a form-based code model (Knoxville South Waterfront) as the basis for developing a specific Cumberland Avenue Design District Development Code.
- **Reconfigure Mountcastle Park** to create an important open space and development connection between the University, Cumberland Avenue, the hospitals and the Fort Sanders neighborhood.
- Support the development of a **public parking resource** in the corridor. Further study is required, but it is clear that there is a need for an organized public parking resource. There is an opportunity to **work with the hospitals and the University to develop shared parking resources** as part of their long-term parking plans.

## Organization of this Plan

**1.0 Introduction** – Introduces the study goals, planning area, public process and the area's historic context.

**2.0 Context Analysis** – Summarizes the key aspects of the area's physical context that influence its existing character and shape its future vision.

**3.0 Issues & Challenges** – Outlines the range of major issues identified by stakeholders and the public that need to be considered in the development of urban design alternatives.

**4.0 The Street** – Describes and illustrates the recommended street design and reconfiguration of Cumberland Avenue based on traffic analysis and public input.

**5.0 The Urban Design Plan**– Describes and illustrates the long-term urban design/development vision for the corridor as shaped by public and stakeholder input.

**6.0 Design Guidelines** – Documents the basic design components that need to be regulated in order to guide private and public investment.

**7.0 Implementation** – Frames the key actions, steps and implementation options for achieving the goals of the plan.

**8.0 Public Input** –Documents the public involvement process.



Cumberland Avenue: Proposed





Study Area

The overall study area extends from Neyland Drive on the west, the Tennessee River on the south, Downtown Knoxville on the east and Interstate 40 on the north. The primary focus of the study is on the Cumberland Avenue corridor from Neyland Drive to 11th Street with a specific urban design emphasis on “The Strip” from West Volunteer to 17th Street.



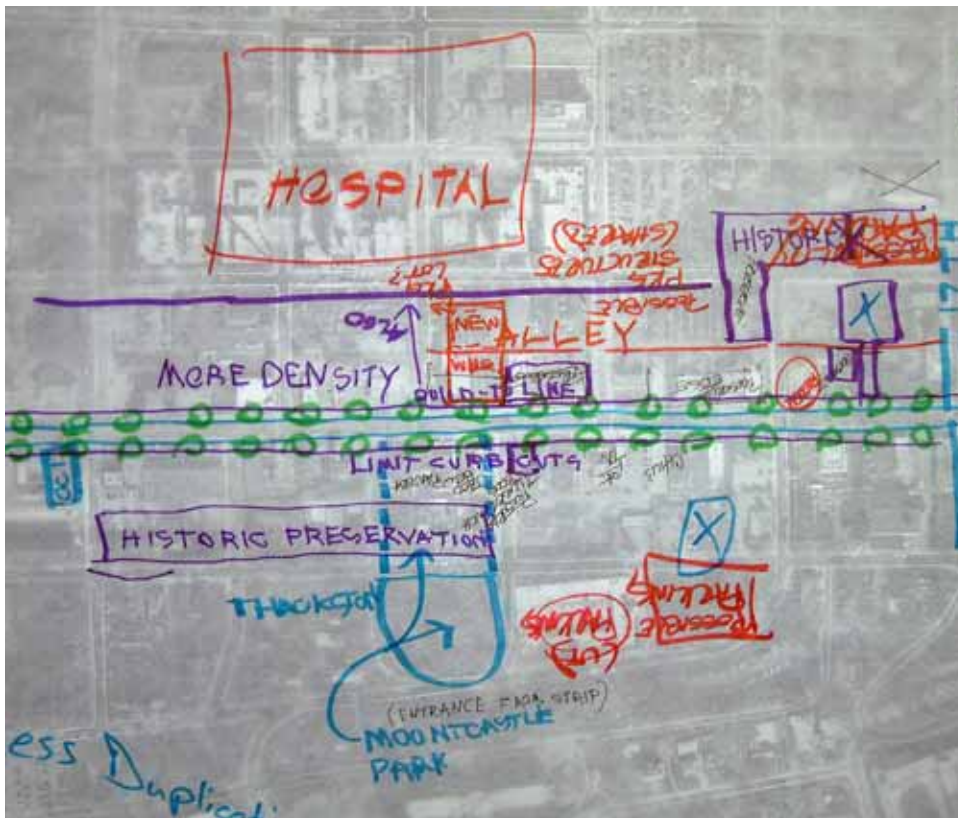
## Introduction



Public design table sessions



Table presentation from public design session



Drawing from public design session



Public review of products

## Process

The planning process included a public outreach component that guided the planning and design efforts throughout the project. A key component of the public process is the Advisory Committee, made up of a diverse representation of stakeholders in the corridor. This committee met regularly over the course of the project to provide input and guidance.

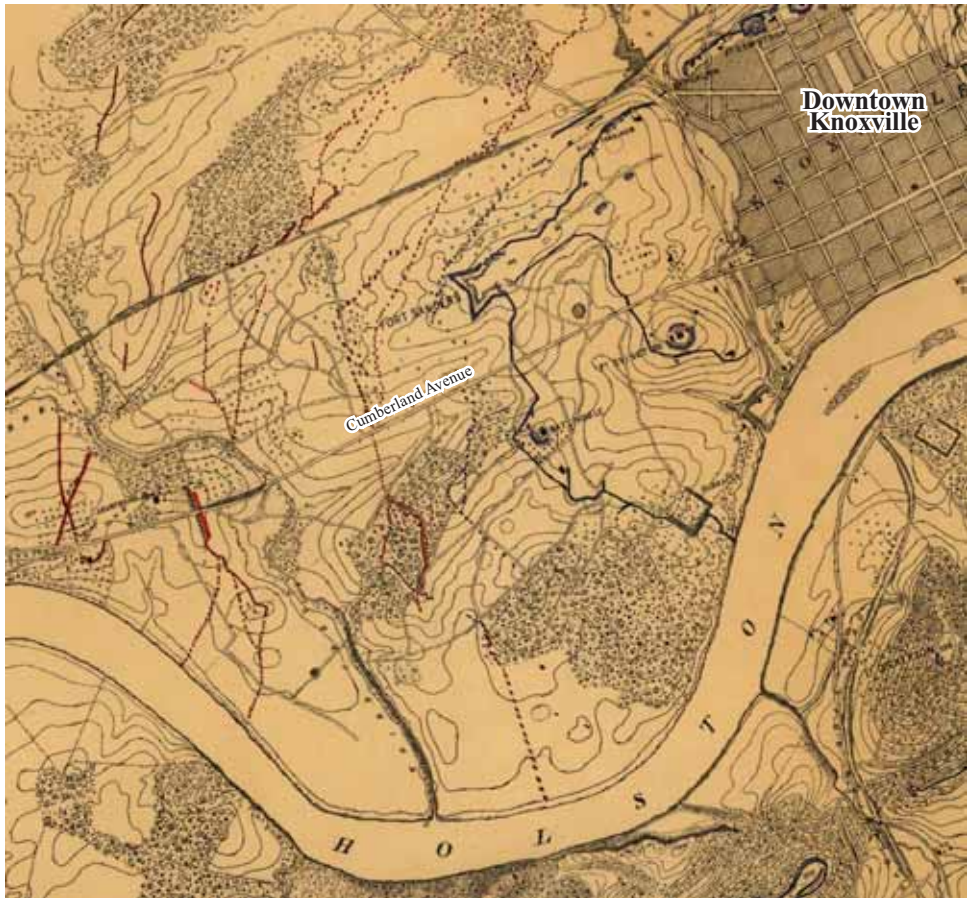
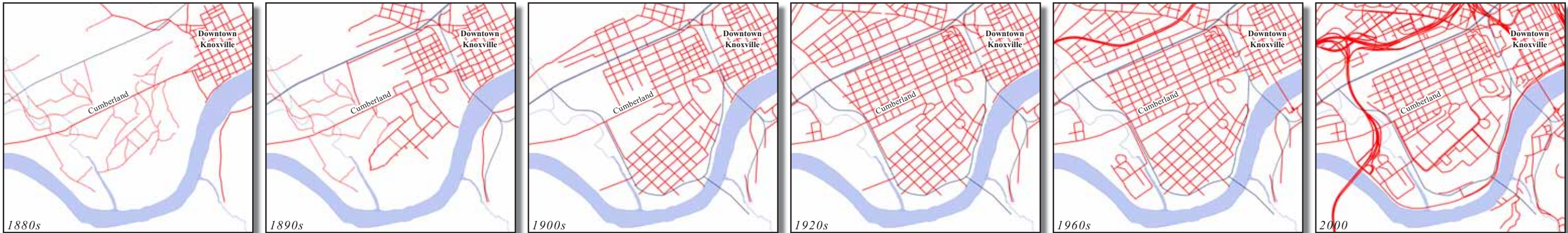
The project team also met individually with many other stakeholders, including property owners, developers, neighborhood representatives, business owners, city agencies, emergency service providers and others to gain direct insight into the issues and concerns facing the Cumberland Avenue corridor.

In addition, several public meetings and design sessions were facilitated during the development of design concepts to gain a broader community perspective. These included:

- A public kick-off meeting (November 9th, 2006), which included a public brainstorming session of ideas and vision for the corridor.
- A public design session (December 5th, 2006) in which participants used basemaps to draw a set of specific ideas and design alternatives for the corridor, producing a range of concepts for the project team to incorporate.
- A project design studio (December 5th-7th, 2006) where the project team worked in an open house format at the UT Student Center developing and refining design concepts while meeting with stakeholders to share the evolving ideas.
- A design studio summary presentation (December 7th, 2006) where the alternatives and concepts developed during the design studio were presented for initial public review and comment.



# Introduction



Area Map from the 1860s



Aerial from Present Day

## A History of Connection

A central theme for the Cumberland Avenue corridor is its evolving function over time and the need to adapt its form and design to meet new roles and purposes.

Cumberland Avenue (historically Kingston Pike) has played a vital role in the history and development of Knoxville, dating back before the Civil War as an important corridor for trade and commerce. Over time, Cumberland Avenue became the transportation spine from which the University of Tennessee, Fort Sanders neighborhood, Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center and East Tennessee Children's Hospital grew westward from downtown.

Today, Cumberland Avenue is no longer the sole transportation corridor in the area but one of several important corridors including Interstate 40, Neyland Drive and Alcoa Highway. In addition, with the growth of the University and hospitals, Cumberland Avenue is now also a place to "go to" in addition to a place to "go through." This new role requires a new attitude, an attitude that balances the street's vehicular transportation role with the area's emerging role as many things: a gateway, a place to live, a place to do business, a place of entertainment, an extension of downtown, a location for redevelopment, etc.

Adapting Cumberland Avenue and its surrounding development pattern to its new role as one of Knoxville's important "places" is the central challenge of this study.

